

the beaten track for their subjects, there is not much that demands close description. Composition, in so far as it means the devising of elaborate schemes, is practically unknown in Holland. To pass through the present collection is like traversing a many windowed corridor. Through each opening one catches a glimpse of Holland, first, a cluster of old roofs beneath a wet sky, as in Bastert's "Villie de Vianen"; then a broad beach with moving horses, as in Willy Sluiter's "Sur la Plage"; then the quaint and picturesque lines of Holland's most typical building, as in the "Moulin sur les Remparts" of the late Jacob Maris, and so on through all the phases of a beautiful panorama. These artists are troubled by no complicated ambitions. They are thoughtful, but not of matters outside the scenes that stretch before them. A single member of the school, Jan Hoyne van Papendrecht, travelling to Antwerp and Munich for instruction, has brought back notions of historical painting, and he sends a picture of an action at Sprottau in 1813. It is a fair piece of military painting, but of no very lasting interest. One turns willingly to the landscapes, to the modest studies of domestic sentiment, to the many pictures that are stamped as if with complete insularity, but which are unrivalled anywhere in Europe for their truth, their refinement and their reposeful beauty. The Dutch painters of to-day are, beyond all question, worthy of the old traditions of their land.

So, too, are their neighbors, the Belgians, though with notable differences. Modern Dutch art is, on the whole, idyllic, and, as has been shown, scarcely any one of its typical figures moves outside certain clearly marked boundaries, or disturbs his meditative calm by thinking too hard about the life surrounding him. It is enough for your average Dutch painter if he goes on year after year painting his native village, its environs and its humble people at their meals or walking across the fields. In Belgium there is a livelier curiosity about the human spectacle; Brussels has always provided a kind of link with Paris and the outside world, and

on outside the frame. Every figure is studied with care, and is painted with the boldness that befits the robust lines. The color is perhaps a shade overheated, but not enough for the design to lose its realistic character. It is the work of a man alive to the interest of his subject; one seems to read "Energy," "Enterprise" writ across the canvas, and these words, indeed, express the attitude of the entire school.

"L'Etape," and on all sides one encounters the clear vision and sturdy craftsmanship which the painters named most conspicuously illustrate. In Belgium, as in Holland, there is abundant art that is honest, straightforward, masculine and sincere, marked generally by the quicker mental habit which seems to place the Belgian apart from his closest prototype.

There is strength, too, in the works by several artists who have been much more cosmopolitan than their fellows, especially in those of Alfred Stevens. His has always been a shining name in Paris, and, for that matter, all over the world. His reputation is truly international. His art, after years of contact with Parisian standards, is more French than Belgian in its grace, its delicacy, its agile, decorative quality. But always the serious temper of the Low Countries has played its part in his career. Though he

made his fame in painting the handsome women of the last generation in their now old fashioned costumes, though he took frivolity for his leading motive—with occasional excursions into worldly sentiment—his studies of high born dames weeping over love letters or posing in the sheer pride of opulent beauty and still more gorgeous millinery have an artistic value far above that of mere drawing room decoration. It is worth while to compare him with Jan Van Beers, likewise a Parisianized Belgian. The latter gives his little portraits the sleek surface of an enamel. He is amazingly skilful, and some of his portraits here have the charm of a brilliant tour de force. But Stevens, who has quite as much polish as Van Beers, softens it and raises it to a higher power; he can be as minute as Meissonier, but in every one of the eight pictures by him in this collection he secures



"LE TIR A L'ARC."

(From the painting by Firmin Baes.)



"L'ATELIER."

(From the painting by Alfred Stevens.)

while the mere importers of French fads are happily absent from this exhibition there are signs everywhere of a reaction against the uneventful state of affairs among the Dutch. Once across the border that separates Holland from Belgium the transition from the grave dignity of Rembrandt to the courtly elegance of Van Dyck is quickly realized; the idyllic simplicity of Israels, Blommers, Van der Waay and their colleagues gives place to a more nervous realism and to movements even more unconventional.

"Le Tir à l'Arc" of Firmin Baes offers an apt illustration of the change. There is nothing like it in the Dutch section. It represents the members of an archery club met for practice or contest under a rough board structure that shelters them from the sun. The stout villagers in their white shirts are intent upon the business in hand, one of them drawing his shaft to a head while the others keenly watch him. A mother and her child stand on the right, both gazing away from the sport to look at something going

The collection is varied, for all that it is so small. The realism of J. Stobbaerts means the painting on a large scale of stable and farm yard scenes, one of his two pictures celebrating the slaughter of a cow by brawny peasants. Alexandre Struys, in three big canvases, deals with the sorrows of the poor. There is an old woman watching by a sick bed in "La Conscience en Dieu," a similar figure is praying in "Maria Maand," and in "Désespéré" one sees the priests going with softened tread into the death chamber. The pathos is simple and direct, as is the excellent workmanship spent upon the three compositions. Verwee, the painter of "La Ghilde de Saint Guidon," portrays in that picture a party of homespun Belgians in Sunday attire, clumsily mounted on heavy horses and proceeding about their holiday business with stolid enjoyment. It is an animated work, turgid here and there in the brushwork, but, in the main, satisfactory. There is merit of the same sort in the cavalry subject of Leon Abry, "Arrivée à



"L'ENCENS."

(From the painting by Fernand Khnopff.)